What are the ed-tech tools that educators can't live without? Each month, we'll ask a different reader.

Jim Beeghley, PhD

Geography and More: [Google Earth](#)
This amazing tool can be used for more than just geography. For instance, you can use it to track the travels of historical figures, such as following a particular unit during the American Civil War by adding image overlays to create "then and now" images and looking at its locations over time.
http://www.google.com/earth/

3D Modeling: [Google Sketchup](#)
When combined with Google Earth, Sketchup allows you to bring 3D models into locations on Google Earth. Check out the 3D Warehouse to find historical buildings, famous landmarks, monuments, and statues from history. You can also have your students research a monument and then recreate it in Sketchup.
http://www.sketchup.com/
http://sketchup.google.com/3dwarehouse/

Audio and Movie Creation: [iPod Touch / iPad](#)
Beyond their thousands of apps, these devices can be used for a variety of things in the classroom. Students can recreate historical events, speeches, and interviews through movies or audio recordings. Also, you can have students examine images and paintings and make notes on them using an app like Educreations.
http://www.apple.com/students/ipodtouch-iphone/
http://www.educreations.com/

Website Creation: [Weebly](#)
Websites are a great way for your students to combine creativity with writing, research, and technology. Have them create a website for a historical topic, event, or location, or ask them to create a blog for a famous person. This is also a great way to incorporate primary and secondary sources into instruction.
http://www.weebly.com/

Historical Thinking: [The Library of Congress](#)
My favorite thing to do is find some resource on the LOC website, project it, and get students (or teachers) to start discussing the item and asking questions. The LOC has everything from maps and photographs to letters, paintings, and audio files. Let your students explore the resource, and then you can ask inquiry-type questions to foster the discussion.
http://www.loc.gov/index.html

Have great tech essentials you'd like to share with readers? [Email me](#) your contribution.
Jim Beeghley, PhD, is an educational technologist, blogger, podcaster, and expert in using technology to teach social studies—with a particular interest in the [American Civil War](#). He has spent 11 years as a technology coordinator, including five years supporting educational technology for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He has also worked as an instructional technologist in higher education and has been an adjunct professor since 2005.